

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 are pending and stand ready for further action on the merits.

Claims 5-7 and 10 have been amended to remove the improper multiple dependency.

No new matter has been added by way of the above-amendment. The above-amendment does not narrow the scope of the invention and/or has not been amended for the sake of patentability.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant notes with appreciation that the Examiner has allowed claims 1-10. In the Examiner's Reasons for Allowance, the Examiner states as follows:

None of the references disclose alone or in combination a flexible joint comprises a connecting metallic tube in which connect externally with overlapping at its ends the metallic tubes after splicing it is performed between the optical fiber which they enclose and which are separated in bundles. Note, that this mechanical connection of the joint is achieved through plastic deformation of the over-applied connecting metallic tube by creating grooved rings at the sections where it overlaps the metallic tubes to be connected.

Applicant is appreciative that the Examiner has found the inventive flexible factory joint as being allowable over the prior art wherein the joint is described as enclosing optical fibers separated in one or more bundles (1, 2) and spliced together at the

ends and the connecting tube is connected to metallic tubes at overlapping sections by grooved rings made by plastic deformation.

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner issues a Supplemental Notice of Allowability which indicates that this Amendment has been entered into the Official Record for placing claims in better form.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact **Garth M. Dahlen, Ph.D., Esq.** (Reg. No. 43,575) at the telephone number of the undersigned below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By Garth M. Dahlen #43575
Raymond C. Stewart, #21,066
Garth M. Dahlen, Ph.D., #43,575

RCS/GMD/mua
2577-0111P

P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000

Attachment(s)